

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 IGA-02 FDRE-00

HEW-06 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 DHA-02 SCA-01

SCSE-00 EB-08 IO-13 SSO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-05 PM-04

TRSE-00 FAA-00 CAB-05 CU-04 FBOE-00 SY-05 OPR-02

INRE-00 USIE-00 DOTE-00 /145 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1933

CIA NIACT IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAHINGEN

JCS WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

MACE RAMSTEIN AB GER

UNCLAS BUCHAREST 1491

FOR AID/PHA 1FDRC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SWEL, EAID, RO

SUBJECT: EARTHQUAKE SITREP

REF: BUCHAREST 1464

1. SUMMARY GIVEN SEVERITY OF QUAKE, VISIBLE DAMAGE IN BUCHAREST LIGHTER THAN WE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED. UTILITY SERVICE BEING REESTABLISHED. GOVERN'T'S RESPONSE IN CLEANING UP MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED REGIONS AND CONTROLLING MOVEMENTS APPEARS REASONABLY PROMPT AND EFFECT. BUCHAREST POPULACE APPEARS TO HAVE RECOVERED QUICKLY AND IS THUS FAR EXERCISING ADMIRABLE CONTROL. END SUMMARY

2. DAMAGE ESTIMATE

AMBASSADOR WAS INFORMED EARLY THIS MORNING AT AIRPORT ARRIVAL OF PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU THAT 170 DEATHS HAD BEEN OFFICIALLY UNCLASSIFIED

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CONFIRMED. JUDGING FROM FACT A NUMBER OF HIGH-RISE APARTMENTS THAT HAVE COLLAPSED AND CONSIDERING ESTIMATE OF AMERICAN MEDICAL STUDENT THAT 100 PERSONS DIED IN HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM WHERE HE WAS ASSISTING WE WOULD EXPECT TOLL TO RISE HIGHER. QUICK SURVEY THAT EMBASSY STAFF HAS MADE OF FEW AREAS OF CITY, INCLUDING NEW APARTMENT COMPLEXES, REVEALS THAT EVEN THESE RELATIVELY POORLY-BUILT STRUCTURES HAVE WITHSTOOD SHOCK. THERE

IS NONETHELESS, STRUCTURAL DAMAGE TO SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF CITY HOUSING.

3. UTILITIES

SITUATION VARIES FROM ONE SECTION OF CITY TO ANOTHER BUT GENERALLY SERVICE IS RETURNING. RADIO BUCHAREST INDICATES THAT TEAMS ARE WORKING ROUND-THE-CLOCK TO REESTABLISH SUPPLIES OF WATER AND GAS. APPEAL HAS BEEN BROADCAST TO REDUCE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE CONSUMPTION OF ELECTRICAL POWER SINCE SOME MAJOR TRANSFORMERS THAT SUPPLY CITY HAVE BEEN DAMAGED. AUTHORITIES HAVE FURTHER ADVISED THAT WATER BE BOILED.

4. FOOD SUPPLIES/PROVISIONS.

MANY STORES WERE OPEN THIS MORNING. LINES OF SHOPPERS CLEARLY LONGER THAN USUAL, BUT WE HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF STAMPEDE AND ONLY A COUPLE OF INSTANCES OF HOARDING. RADIO HAS ISSUED CONTINUOUS STREAM OF ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DIVERSION TO BUCHAREST FROM SURROUNDING CITIES OF FOOD SUPPLIES. LINES OF CARS AT SERVICE STATIONS ARE EXTREMELY LONG.

5. TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATION

TRAIN SERVICE TO BUCHAREST CAME TO COMPLETE HALT, BUT WE ARE INFORMED THAT NORMAL RUNS WILL RESUME TOMORROW. BOTH INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC AIRPORTS IN BUCHAREST ARE REPORTED IN OPERATION, WITH FULL SCHEDULE OF DOMESTIC FLIGHTS SLATED FOR TOMORROW. TELEPHONE SERVICE IS SPORADIC.

6. OTHER AREAS

WE HAVE ALMOST NO INFORMATION ON DAMAGE SUFFERED BY OTHER CITIES

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NEAR EPICENTER. REPORT MALCOLME BROWNE, WHO JUST DROVE THROUGH TRANSYLVANIA, RELATES HE SAW ALMOST NO EVIDENCE OF DAMAGE ON HIS JOURNEY. SECOND-HAND REPORT ON SITUATION IN ADJUD (COMMUNITY ABOUT 30 KM FROM GHEORGHE GHEORGHIU DEJ) SUGGESTS DAMAGE WAS NOT SEVERE. AREA NEAR VRANCEA REPORTED TO BE AFFECTED SOMEWHAT MORE. RUMOR IS THAT IASI ALSO SUFFERED.

7. REACTION OF THE POPULACE

WE HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH DISCIPLINE AND RESTRAINT EXHIBITED BY MOST BUCHAREST RESIDENTS. AFTER CONFUSION AND TRAFFIC JAMS OF LAST EVENING, SURPRISING TRANQUILITY HAS RETURNED TO CITY. LINES IN FRONT OF STORES ARE ORDERLY. FLOCKS OF SIGHTSEERS WHO HAVE DESCENDED UPON CENTER OF CITY APPEAR MORE CURIOUS THAN DISTRAUGHT.

8. GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSE.

GOR HAS QUICKLY ASSERTED CONTROL. CLEAN-UP OPERATIONS WERE STARTED EARLY THIS MORNING TO REMOVE WRECKAGE OF COLLAPSED APARTMENTS NEAR EMBASSY. IN CENTER OF CITY THESE EFFORTS HAVE

BEEN HAMPERED BY THRONGS OF PASSERS-BY, BUT LARGE NUMBER OF MILITIA AND SOLDIERS ARE ON SCENE.

9. OFFICIAL PERSONNEL

THANKFULLY WE HAVE NO REPORTED CASUALTIES AMONG EMBASSY COMMUNITY, GRANTEES, RESIDENT BUSINESSMEN OR TOURISTS.

10. CHANCERY STATUS

ELECTRICAL SUPPLY RESUMED THIS AFTERNOON, BUT WE ARE STILL LACKING WATER. PHONE SERVICE IS EXTREMELY LIMITED. TELEX IS FUNCTIONING SPORADICALLY. ALTHOUGH ALL OF CHANCERY AND MAJORITY OF ANNEX ARE HABITABLE, BOTH HAVE SUFFERED CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE. IN CHANCERY PROPER, THIRD FLOOR CEILING BEAM IS CRACKED, SOME WALLS ARE CRACKED ON SECOND FLOOR, AS IS MAIN STAIRWELL DOME. ANNEX, WHICH HIT HARDER, HAS WAVES IN TOP FLOOR AND CRACKS IN ALMOST ENTIRE CEILING. IN ADDITION, TWO CHANCERY CHIMNEYS ARE LEANING PRECARIOUSLY WHILE OUTER CEMENT WALL ON NORTH SIDE OF

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CHANCERY IS ALMOST DOWN.

1. AMERICAN LIBRARY

AS OF THIS MORNING, PRELIMINARY WALK-THROUGH OF AMERICAN LIBRARY REVEALED NO MAJOR STRUCTURAL DAMAGE. MANY OF ROOMS HAVE SOME CRACKS, HOWEVER. OUR CONCERN IS POTENTIAL DANGER REPRESENTED BY BUILDING WHICH COLLAPSED ACROSS STREET AND IS STILL SMOKING.

11. STAFF HOUSING

DAMAGE TO HOUSES WAS LIGHTER THAN THAT SUFFERED BY APARTMENTS, WHICH IN SOME CASES WAS HEAVY. IN MOST INSTANCES APARTMENT RESIDENTS ARE BEING TEMPORARILY HOUSED IN OTHER EMBASSY QUARTERS. WHILE ELECTRICITY HAS RETURNED TO MOST HOUSING, RESUMPTION OF GAS, WATER, AND TELEPHONE SERVICE HAS VARIED FROM ONE SECTION OF CITY TO ANOTHER.

12. AMERICAN SCHOOL

ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE DECLARED SCHOOL TO BE UNSAFE.

13. OFFICIAL ESTIMATE

OUR REQUESTS TO MFA AND FOREIGN LIAISON OFFICER OF MOD FOR DETAILS ON LOSSES SUFFERED AND ASSISTANCE NEEDED HAVE THUS FAR BEEN UNAVAILING. IF 1975 FLOOD IS ANY PRECEDENT, IT COULD TAKE SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE GOVERNMENT SORTS OUT WHAT IT WILL REQUEST OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. LACKING SUCH A REQUEST WE DO NOT RECOMMEND FURTHER USG OFFERS OF AID OR ASSISTANCE BEYOND THAT ALREADY MADE.

BARNES

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